

# **Wisconsin Governor Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing**

## **MEETING MINUTES**

MAY 13, 2016

10:00 AM

Room 751

1 West Wilson Street, Madison, WI 53707

**Members present:** Nicole Everson (Chair), Tracy Haas (Secretary), Tom O'Connor, Steve Smart, and Karl Nollenberger

**Members excused:** Denise Johnson (Vice Chair)

**Ex-officio members:** N/A

**Ex-officio members excused:** Billy Mauldin

**ODHH Staff:** Dan Millikin (Director), Amber Mullett (Social Services Supervisor), and Mason Aumanstal (Assistive Technology Program Coordinator)

**Chair called the meeting to order at 10:06 AM**

**Approval of December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2015, minutes:** Need to edit under Members present that Karl Nollenberger (arrived an hour late), suggestion to add in the minute report to include- Present, Late, Absent and explanations for abbreviations.

**Motion:** Tom O' Connor moved (Karl Nollenberger seconded).

**Passed:** unanimously as amended.

**Chair Report:** New member, David Seligman who was not able to attend the meeting today because he has not received the confirmation letter. He will join us in September 2016. David Seligman will be representing the hard of hearing community.

There are other individuals who are interested, but they have not applied. These individuals would like to attend the next meeting to see how the meeting runs.

After some discussion about the current council members, Dan Millikin indicated that he would send out the updated list but noted that there are two open positions on the council, one to represent the deaf community and the other one to represent the hard of hearing community.

**ACTION:** Dan Millikin will send out the updated list to the council.

If there are other members should be added or if further categories of individuals to be added to the list. I would like to see that we more individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing, parents of deaf or hard of hearing, and a professional such as an audiologist.

**ACTION:** Dan Millikin will check with the Governor's office to see what the process of adding these individuals to the council member roster list.

**ODHH Director Report:** Dan M. indicated that Amber M. will present on the Board for Evaluating Interpreters (BEI) and Mason A. will be discussing an update to Administrative Rule DHS Chapter 78 and other Assistive Technology issues and it will be effective on July 1<sup>st</sup>.

The Bureau of Aging and Disability Resources (BADR) will be moving to the Division of Public Health (DPH). There will be two divisions, the Division of Long-Term Care (DLTC) and Division of Health Care Access and Accountability (DHCAA). Both of these two divisions will become a new division: Division of Medicaid Services (DMS).

Nicole asked about a merger discussion involving Independent Living Centers (ILC) from the last meeting. Dan let Nicole know that the Coordinator of People with Physical Disabilities under BADR will work with ILCs.

Nicole asked for clarification. It was her understanding that ILCs are contracted. Dan clarified that they are contracted and will stay the same under the merger.

Dan clarified the difference between ILCs and Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRC); ADRCs are county based programs (some serving multiple counties). The goal is that there will be more collaboration between ADRCs and ILCs.

Nicole expressed her personal concern that ILCs are not receiving the funding they need to provide services. Amber noted that ILC funding is proportionate to the population they serve. Some will receive more, others will receive less. Some programs will have programs that are Medicaid draw-downs. Nicole confirmed this cleared her understanding.

**ODHH Staff Updates** by Dan Millikin who had provided the report of these ODHH staff activities.

There is a new ODHH Specialist, Jennifer Anderson that provides the same services as other ODHH regional staff.

Director wants the ODHH staff to reach out to the Managed Care Organization (MCO) to provide the education on how to request interpreters and meet the consumer's needs.

There was a recent push for the establishment of a Deaf Commission based on a perceived lack of benefits and resources. ODHH Director hopes to become more involved in this discussion to show how ODHH is serving the community. After brief discussion, this item was moved to New Business.

**Assistive Technology Program Updates** by Mason Aumanstal and Amber Mullett provided his report on about his work projects and information about the Department of Health Services (DHS) Chapter 78.

Mason discussed that there was an initiative go get personal information about the Hearing Loops into the Aging Department Resource Centers (ADRC). He had worked with a local vendor, Lisa Zovar to provide the hearing loops and personal receivers. Mason didn't have any numbers; Tom (member) noted that Lisa did confirmed at the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) meeting that 78 had been delivered.

Update on DHS Chapter 78 Administrative Rule, he indicated that that an advisory committee has been identified and confirmed to act as a guide for the rule update process.

Amber stated that DHS Chapter 78 governing the Telecommunications Assistance Program (TAP) will be changed significantly for the first time since 2003, before that they had remained the same since 1996. Amber asked that one of the fall public meetings be held during the council meeting.

Steve (member) had asked for clarification about the relationship between the Telecommunication Purchase Program (TEPP) and TAP. Amber discussed that TAP was established in 1983 when Teletypewriters (TTY) were the only items available for deaf and hard of hearing communication. TAP currently sees a budget of about \$80,000 per year. At one time, TAP and TEPP were providing the same devices. Eventually, TAP was a program that provided the \$100 co-pay for TEPP equipment. The proposal is to divorce the two programs because TEPP ceases operations, then there would be no TAP. The other main goal is to allow TAP to have updates to definitions, eligibility requirements and applications procedures.

Amber then urged that the council members to go out to the community when the public hearings are being held so that the voice of the consumer is heard.

**Board of Evaluating Interpreters (BEI)** Amber Mullett discussed the BEI and the program that Wisconsin is currently using to evaluate sign language interpreters, the Wisconsin Interpreting and Transliterating Assessment (WITA) which ODHH has administered for many years.

The 2009 Wisconsin Act 360 which required that sign language interpreters to be licensed in order to work for compensation in the state of Wisconsin. The Department of Safety and Professional Services made two license provisions; a renewal license and restricted license (restricted in the time of upholding or maintaining the license). Prior to 2009 Wisconsin Act 360, WITA was being conducted as a program to provide feedback to interpreters that wanted to improve. This program was initially purchased in the 90s from Kansas and new scripts were purchased in 2010 since then Kansas has ceased administering and supporting the WITA.

ODHH explored other avenues to licensure, including a mentorship program before deciding the BEI was the best option found. Other states including Illinois and Michigan administer the BEI allowing those that get licensed by the BEI to move freely to states that have the BEI license. Amber noted that the WITA was administered 236 times to 174 different individuals with a pass rate of about 78% (similar to the national certification success rate).

There are 28 individuals that will no longer be eligible to get a renewable license as of September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017. This shows the difficulty and limitations of using an assessment that is not used in other states.

The BEI has an important component is the English proficiency.

The WITA also does not assess the performance of deaf interpreters while the BEI does. There are three performances based examples: basic, advanced and master. They are different tests. The goal is to have everything in place by August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2017.

Amber encourages anyone that has questions to reach out to the ODHH. Amber asked for the future meeting to add for the individuals from Texas that are leasing the BEI to come up to train ODHH staff.

Nicole (Chair) had asked if there was any feedback from individuals that use interpreters. Amber noted that there are some resistance to the BEI because it is new, but the planning is very early, so since there's not a lot information to share, there hasn't been a wealth of feedback. Nicole had asked Steve's (member) opinion. Steve asked Amber first; since the raters are credential holders, is there a place for the deaf to rate even though they don't have the credential? Amber noted that deaf individuals will be part of the evaluation process. Steve's main comment about the BEI is that there's a concern in the community about a place for deaf rater, since there is a place for deaf rater, Steve believes this will ease that concern.

## **Lunch Break**

**Survivor Coalition of Wisconsin:** Nicole (Chair) noted that the council has been a member of the Survivor Coalition of Wisconsin in the past. The council was asked to renew their membership. Nicole doesn't know anything about this initiative.

**ACTION:** Dan Millikin is planning to meet with Maureen Ryan to discuss how ODHH can work with them.

Steve asked that this topic be tabled for new business and then we can ask someone to review the information and potential logistics of joining the Coalition.

## **OLD BUSINESS:**

**IRIS Program:** Nicole asked about the old business and there was no update to discuss with regard to the IRIS program.

**Council Logo Update:** At the last meeting it was discussed that there were going to be some updates to the communication card. Dan (Director) had noted that Melanie was going to handle this project, Melanie is on medical leave. The updated was to include the weapon to the list of items in the communication card. Tracy had indicated that her husband, Jason had offered his services for free. Tracy had made a suggestion how to make some changes to the communication card (i.e. add the weapon and move header)

**ACTION:** ODHH will address this as soon as possible.

**Council Meeting Dates:** Does the Council need to make up the missed meeting?

Per to discussion among the council if there is a need to make up the meeting. There been several issues conflict with schedule/conference room, concerns with CART, interpreters arrangement, bylaws discussed and the council decided to go forward with the dates that been set for September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016 and December 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016 for this year.

**Communication via Email:** Dan (Director) asked if the council is communicating via email.

Steve advised that another council through DSPS that he serves on is not allowed to communicate privately; these meetings must be held in public. Karl noted that the council cannot communicate without quorum which is 5. Nicole had asked Dan to look into whether the council can communicate outside of the open meeting.

**Council's State Plan and Goal's for the Council:** Nicole discussed developing goals for the council.

Nicole had discussed with Carrie Molke, reached out to HLAA and Wisconsin Association of the Deaf (WAD) for their inputs. Steve advised that it might be wise to have an individual that has developed these plans in the past come in to assist the council in the development of theirs. Nicole advised that there is no resource available currently. Steve advised that the council should approach this at another meeting that focuses on this issue. Nicole advised she proposed a similar plan last year and at the last meeting she asked council members to look it over. Steve advised that the development of such a plan can be arduous and can take all day.

Nicole asked if ODHH has a state plan facilitators. Dan advised that we have project managers, but would require money to get this done. Nicole will send out the state plan example that Carrie gave Nicole so that everyone has a chance to look at it. Tracy asked if there's a dry-erase board that we can use at the next meeting. Dan thinks that there is. Steve noted that he isn't looking to get out of the work, but there is a time and

process concern. Steve wonders if there's anyone that can lead this process in ODHH. Dan says we can provide a person like that, but in the interest of having impartiality, it would be better to bring someone else in.

Nicole asked Karl if he could facilitate this, Karl noted that he could, but it would also be a conflict of interest. Amber noted that project managers in DHS cost about \$120 per hour. Amber noted that from the sound of it, it's not a project manager the council is looking for, but rather a facilitator. Someone to take notes, guide discussion, create action items. Nicole asked if the list that we have should be passed around and approach the state plan today; there are also future items that need to be addressed going forward so addressing this now would free up time in the future.

Amber advised that we might be doing the council a disservice to try to cram it in now. Nicole asked if anyone would like to touch on this before moving on. There was no response. Nicole will send an email with a template for people to fill in with items that might eventually make it on the state plan. Tracy asked that this be added as "homework" for the council to look at. Nicole advised that the state plan will be addressed in September.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

**Update the Council's Website:** Nicole would like to see that the agenda and the minutes are added to the website. There are some additional changes that need to be adjusted such as the photos of the council need to be updated, the bio information are different for everyone and it need to be more consistent.

**ADVISED:** Dan advised that ODHH works with Office Associates to add the information.

Nicole wanted to discuss the addition of the council members; specifically of adding a person with Cochlear Implant user and parents of deaf or hard of hearing child. Nicole thinks that adding more members is the only way we will get input from these communities. Steve isn't sure of the process.

**ACTION:** Dan (Director) will look into what other officers are doing and if the bylaws need to be changed.

**BEI Discussion:** Nicole advised that we just had the BEI discussion and Amber asked for the council's support.

Steve stated that the council support ODHH in looking into the process and proposal. When we have more information is available, the board can revisit supporting the proposal. Tom had asked whether the Texas representatives would be available. Dan confirmed this is the assumption that we're going forward with the plan. Steve clarified that it wasn't necessarily in the next meeting, but sometime in the future. Dan also confirmed this but added it could be around the spring of next year.

**Deaf Commission:** Nicole discussed the Commission for the Deaf that is being looked at in Wisconsin.

People had expressed concerns to Nicole that if the commission is approved, the council will be absolved. Nicole asked if ODHH would be dissolved as well. Steve said that it's too early to know this. Steve further noted that there are 2 separated groups, one is for the state licensure of interpreters and the other group is WAD (as Dan clarified, this is not to be confused with the Deaf Grassroots Movement) looking to form a commission that would work right under the Governor's office.

Nicole asked Steve if WAD is working on a commission for just the deaf or if the commission would be for the deaf, hard of hearing and deaf-blind? Steve advised that the goal is to work with all groups. Tracy noted that the commission is just called Commission for the deaf at this time.

Nicole asked how does the Commission affect the council and if there's a conflict of interest to be on the commission and the council? Steve advised that the council try to get the commission in here to discuss with the information from the council to the commission. Nicole asked Dan for his opinion, but Dan said that the Council works to advise to the ODHH and the commission committee might aim to set up its own commission with the Board of Directors that may operate like the current Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

Karl noted that having a council member on the commission committee would ensure that the council is heard. Dan advised being completely transparent with regard to status of current council membership if getting involved with the Commission.

**DHS Chapter 78:** Nicole asked about a session that Amber previously mentioned that would be set aside for a future meeting to discuss changes to DHS Chapter 78. Mason advised that having this meeting in September would be too early. Nicole asked if December 2016 or March 2017 would be better? Mason confirmed that this would be a good course of action.

Nicole moved to adjourn at 1:54 PM.

**Motion:** PASSED unanimously

Next meeting: Friday, September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Minutes Reported by Denise Johnson (Vice Chair)